
If you believe you are eligible to vote and encounter difficulty registering, please contact the Elections section of the Minnesota Secretary of State:

Minnesota Secretary of State
180 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155
(651) 296-2803 (voice)
(877) 600-VOTE (toll-free)

If the Minnesota Secretary of State is unable to help you, or to report a problem, contact:

U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Voting Section, Rm. 7254 - NWB
Washington, D.C. 20530
(202) 307-2767 (voice)
(800) 253-3931 (toll-free)
(202) 307-3961 (fax)
www.usdoj.gov/crt

This pamphlet is provided for informational purposes only, as an aid to further inquiry. The laws in many states are revised frequently, and may have changed since this pamphlet was issued. It is your responsibility to determine whether you are lawfully eligible to vote, and criminal penalties can result from voting when ineligible or making false statements on a registration form.

Issued December, 2000

U.S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division



Restoring Your Right to Vote



The right to vote is an important civil right in a democracy as well as a civic responsibility, and yet many persons who have been convicted of a crime do not know whether they are eligible to vote. For both federal and state elections, the right to vote is controlled by the law of the state in which you live. Some states restrict the right to vote for persons who have been convicted of a crime. This pamphlet is intended to help you determine whether you are eligible to vote in the state in which you live, and if so, what steps you must take to be permitted to vote.

What law governs whether my felony conviction limits my right to vote?

The impact of a criminal conviction on the right to vote varies widely from state to state. Whether you can vote after being convicted of a crime is determined by the state in which you live, not the state in which you were convicted.

Can I vote while I'm incarcerated in Minnesota?

If you are a resident of Minnesota, you cannot vote while you are incarcerated as a result of a conviction for a felony or for treason. If you are a resident of another state who is temporarily incarcerated in Minnesota, you may be able to vote by absentee ballot in your home state. You need to consult the law of your home state regarding both criminal convictions and absentee ballots to see if this is a possibility.

I have been released from incarceration. How do I restore my right to vote?

If you were convicted of treason or of a felony, your right to vote is automatically restored upon discharge from your sentence. Discharge occurs either by order of the sentencing court, following stay of sentence or stay of execution of sentence, or upon final expiration of your sentence.

What if my conviction was for a federal crime?

Minnesota applies the same rules whether you were convicted of a federal or state crime.

What if I was convicted in another state?

The same rules apply for Minnesota voters even if the conviction occurred in another state.

What happens if I move to another state?

If you move to another state, your right to vote will be controlled by the laws of that state.

What are Minnesota's other voter registration requirements?

To be eligible to vote in Minnesota, you must be 18 years of age or older, be a citizen of the United States, and be a resident of Minnesota for 20 days immediately prior to the election.

When do I need to register to vote?

Registration is available year-round in Minnesota. You can also register at your polling place on election day. You will need one of the following to verify your residence.

- a current, valid Minnesota driver's license, learner's permit or identification card (or receipt for a new one) *containing your address in the precinct*
- a "Notice of Late Registration" card mailed to you by your county auditor (if you turned in a registration card late)
- someone who is registered in the precinct where you live to vouch for your residence
- valid registration at another address in the same precinct
- US passport, US military identification card or student identification card that includes your name and photo or a

Minnesota driver's license (that may not be current or valid) AND an original bill for water, sewer, gas, electric, phone, solid waste or cable television services that includes your name and current address in the precinct and has a due date within 30 days of election day

Where do I go to register?

You can register to vote at the polls on election day. Voter registration forms are available at county courthouses, city halls and other public buildings throughout the state, in many telephone books, in your state tax booklet (in even-numbered years) or by downloading a copy from the state elections website:

www.sos.state.mn.us/election

You may also register to vote when you apply for or renew your Minnesota driver's license or state identification card.